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181103Z Jan 06

UNCLAS CAIRO 000258

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT FOLLOWING  
MUBARAK-VICE PRESIDENT MEETING

In a press conference on January 17 following President Mubarak's meeting with Vice President Cheney, Presidential Spokesman Soliman Awwad made the following statement:

Begin statement:

The Mubarak-Cheney talks lasted for two hours and touched on various issues, including the Middle East, Sharon's health, Palestinian elections, Iran, Iraq, the Syrian-Lebanese situation, multilateral relations, and bilateral relations.

Iraq:

The talks dealt with means of restoring calm, stability, and independence and maintaining Iraqi unity while achieving dtente among various factions. Egypt has trained Iraqi troops and security elements in Egypt and is still offering to help Iraq rebuild its cadres. Through ORASCOM Telecom, Egypt is taking part in the reconstruction of Iraq despite the difficult conditions Iraq is going through.

Iran:

There has to be a certain quorum for an emergency IAEA meeting in Vienna to discuss referring Iran's nuclear file to the SC. Egypt calls for continuing the (international) dialogue with Iran through diplomatic channels. Israel is the only country in the region whose nuclear establishments are not subject to inspection and the guarantees of the IAEA.

We call for internationalizing the NPT and having all countries abide by the provisions of the Treaty, including Israel. We also urge Iran to show further flexibility and transparency because the Middle East does not need a nuclear weapon race. Egypt's call for removing all WMD from the region goes back 15 years. The credibility of the EU position towards Iran's nuclear program will remain dependent on (adopting) a similar position towards internationalizing the NPT without any double standards.

Syria-Lebanon:

We can't say that the Mubarak-Cheney talks today came up with solutions, yet the talks were part of Mubarak's contacts with various international and regional leaders. The issue is not simple, but it has to be based on conformity with legitimacy and the implementation of SC resolutions. Egypt always calls for complying with UN and SC resolutions. You cannot call for adhering to legitimacy with regard to the Palestinian issue and the peace process and not to other issues. Syria has responded (positively) to the investigating commission and declared compliance with the legitimacy of the (relevant) UN resolutions. We keep on encouraging the Syrian and Lebanese sides to comply with legitimacy and reach the best method of normalizing and restoring bilateral relations to their healthy course. Mubarak's consultations with VP Cheney are just like his consultations with French President Chirac on January 4, as well as his contacts with regional and international parties with the aim of reaching an appropriate formula that would allow Syria to cooperate with the international investigating commission. One of these formulas is how to find a way out to continue the cooperation while maintaining Syria's dignity and sovereignty.

Egypt-U.S.:

Mubarak did not have time last year to visit the U.S. His last visit was in April 2004. The year 2005 was a busy year that was full of major political developments that changed Egypt's democratic experience in December 2005. All options are open for a Mubarak visit to the U.S. this year but this issue was not discussed and no date has been set. Bilateral relations are deep and fixed and bilateral cooperation is diverse and multifaceted even if viewpoints are not identical on one issue or another. The Mubarak-Cheney meeting is expressive of the U.S. appreciation of Egypt's role. The U.S. VP comes to hear Mubarak's views just like Mubarak heard the U.S. views on various regional issues.

Reform:

Friends in Washington know that Egypt is not going to go back on reform. Egypt has declared this on many occasions and so

did the President himself. Egypt's democratic image in December 2005 was totally different from January 2005.

End statement.

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